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Ex-Army Man on Trial In Double Agent Case

Charge Is Selling Identities to Soviets

By Caryle Murphy
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Is Richard Craig Smith a traitor who gave the identities of U.S. double agents to a Soviet KGB officer for \$11,000, or is he the victim of a renegade CIA agent who was conducting an operation that went bad?

Those are the two scenarios presented yesterday on the opening day of Smith's trial in U.S. District Court in Alexandria. Smith, a former Army counterintelligence specialist, is accused of conspiracy, transmitting the identities of six double agent operations to the Soviets and disclosing classified information. He faces life imprisonment if convicted. He has denied the charges.

"A straight trade, money for information. Those are his words," Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph J. Aronica told the jury yesterday as he recounted, with details worthy of a Robert Ludlum novel, meetings in Tokyo between the Soviet official, Victor I. Okunev, and Smith, a 42-year-old Mormon from Bellevue, Wash.

"The government will prove its case through Smith's confessions," Aronica said, noting that Smith contacted the FBI to tell them of his meetings with the Soviet official.

While on a business trip to Tokyo in the fall of 1982, Smith called the Soviet Embassy, offering information, Aronica said. After locking his personal belongings, including all of his identification, in a subway locker, Smith went to the Soviet commercial attache's office.

At that first meeting with Okunev, Smith "gave him classified information on 'Lancaster Flag,' " a double agent operation, Aronica said. In a second meeting with Okunev, Smith "gave him all of the code names for" double agent operations and revealed "the identities of U.S. intelligence personnel in the CIA, FBI, National Security Agency and the Army," Aronica said.

FBI agents who heard Smith's story testified yesterday that Okunev and Smith established se-

curity procedures for contacting each other and hiding their meetings. Okunev would contact Smith by paging him in a hotel lobby at a certain time.

Once, the name agreed upon was "Mr. Hemingway." But Smith told FBI agents the page came through at the appointed time for "Mr. Shakespeare." He took the call anyway and it was the Soviet official.

Upon leaving the Soviet compound, Okunev gave Smith a leather tam to wear as a disguise, FBI Special Agent Peter Chase testified.

Smith, who is expected to take the stand at his trial, does not dispute he met with the Soviets, one of his attorneys told the jury yesterday. But it was not to betray his country, said A. Brent Carruth.

There is more to the story laid out by the prosecutor, Carruth said.

When Smith "gave authorized information," to the Soviets, Carruth said, "he was working for the CIA" as part of an operation in which the agency was "hoping to rope one of the Soviet KGB personnel into talking with a U.S. agent" by feeding him useless "chicken-feed" information.

"Is this man a spy?" Carruth asked, referring to his client. "Yes, he is, for the United States for many years."

Carruth said testimony will show that Smith was contacted prior to his meetings with Okunev by two men who said they worked for the CIA and gave him a Honolulu telephone number for a CIA agent named Charles Richardson, alias Richard P. Cavannaugh.

Carruth portrayed Cavannaugh as an agent who did not report all his activities back to CIA headquarters and who "was lining his pockets with gold" from a Honolulu investment firm used as a front by the CIA.

"Even the CIA was taken in in this case," Carruth said.

A witness for the prosecution identified Cavannaugh yesterday as a supervisor in the San Francisco CIA office.



RICHARD CRAIG SMITH
... traitor or victim?